CLAIMS:

1. A method of inhibiting or reducing the proliferation of prostate cancer cells, the method comprising administering to the cells a PLA_2 inhibitor.

2. A method for the treatment of prostate cancer, the method comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a PLA_2 inhibitor.

3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the prostate cancer cells are androgen independent prostate cancer (AIPC) cells.

4. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the PLA_2 inhibitor is a $cPLA_2$-α inhibitor.

5. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the PLA_2 inhibitor is an $sPLA_2$-IIA inhibitor.

6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the PLA_2 inhibitor is a conformationally constrained molecule derived from a peptide consisting essentially of amino acid residues 70-74 of a human $sPLA_2$-IIA protein, or the equivalent residues in other $sPLA_2$ proteins.

7. A method according to claim 6 wherein the conformationally constrained molecule is a cyclic molecule.

8. A method according to claim 6 wherein the conformationally constrained molecule is a cyclic peptide or derivative thereof.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein the conformationally constrained peptide is a cyclic peptide of the following formula:

A1-A2-A3-A4-A5

in which

A1 is F or Y or W or 2Nap

A2 is L or I

A3 is S or T

A4 is F or Y or W or 2Nap

A5 is R or K.

10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the peptide is selected from the group consisting of cFLSYK, cFLSYR and c(2NapA)LS(2NapA)R.

11. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein a $cPLA_2$-α inhibitor is administered in conjunction with an $sPLA_2$-IIA inhibitor.

12. A method for detecting prostate cancer or a metastases thereof in a subject, said method comprising:

determining the level of PLA_2 mRNA expressed in a test sample from said subject; and

comparing the level of PLA_2 mRNA determined at (i) to the level of PLA_2.mRNA expressed in a comparable sample from a healthy or normal individual,

wherein a level of PLA_2 mRNA at (i) that is enhanced in the test sample relative to the comparable sample from the normal or healthy individual is indicative of the presence of a cancer cell in said subject.

13. A method for detecting prostate cancer or a metastases thereof in a subject, said method comprising:

determining the level of a PLA_2 polypeptide in a test sample from said subject; and

comparing the level of PLA_2 polypeptide determined at (i) to the level of said PLA_2 polypeptide in a comparable sample from a healthy or normal individual,

wherein a level of said PLA_2 polypeptide at (i) that is enhanced in the test sample relative to the comparable sample from the normal or healthy individual is indicative of the presence of a cancer cell in said subject.

14. A method of assessing the predisposition of a subject to prostate cancer, the method comprising the step of determining the presence of a polymorphism or an epigenetic change in a PLA_2 gene of the subject.

15. A method according to any one of claims 12 to 14 wherein the prostate cancer cells are androgen independent prostate cancer (AIPC) cells.

16. A method according to any one of claims 12 to 14, wherein the PLA_2 is $cPLA_2$-α.

17. A method according to any one of claims 12 to 14, wherein the PLA_2 is $sPLA_2$-IIA.